



Project Road-Safe **Newsletter** 08-15-06

Workplace Traffic Safety

This is Road-Safe Workplace, an electronic newsletter about workplace traffic safety from the Vermont Department of Labor because the number one cause of death and injury in the workplace are traffic crashes. Road-Safe Workplace has been created to distribute statistics, facts, and other materials to help employers create, maintain and improve their workplace traffic safety programs. Please use this information in your company newsletters, bulletin boards, or employee e-mail memos. Your thoughts and comments are always welcome. However, if you do not wish to receive Road-Safe Workplace, please reply with the word "unsubscribe" in the subject line.







**DRUNK DRIVING
OVER THE LIMIT. UNDER ARREST.**

Commit Now to the 2006 Effort

The annual National Impaired Driving Crackdown kicks off on **August 18** and runs through **September 4, 2006**. Mark your calendars and make a commitment today to join this important effort in the fight against impaired driving and impaired motorcycle riding.

Sign up at www.enforcementsaveslives.org

New Crackdown Theme

New to the campaign this year is an even stronger enforcement theme: **Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.** National TV and radio ads featuring the new theme will begin running August 16.

However, it's your enforcement effort on the ground that will make or break the impaired driving crackdown this year. Come out in force. Increase your impaired driving enforcement August 18 through September 4.

Find Out More

Media toolkits, campaign materials, publications and other resources are available through:

www.StopIMPAIREDdriving.org

National Impaired Driving Crackdown is August 18-September 4

Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest. National Crackdown Campaign, a high-visibility enforcement crackdown on drunk drivers is scheduled for the high traffic Labor Day holiday. The enforcement mobilization is sponsored by the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in partnership with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the Governors' Highway Safety

Association (GHSA) and law enforcement agencies nationwide. The comprehensive impaired driving prevention program focuses on combining high-visibility enforcement with heightened public awareness through advertising and publicity. For further information, <http://www.enforcementsaveslives.org>.

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(We often talk about “Highway Heros” in terms of people who respond to the needs of others involved in traffic crashes or dangerous incidents on our roadways. We don’t often consider safe driving records as strong evidence in support of a “highway hero.” Perhaps we should. Read on.)

Sometimes, the things we dread the most turn out to be the best times we have.

by Sandy Smith, Editor, Occupational Hazards (a newsletter of the Occupational Safety & Health Community)

“Some 3 months ago, I received a call from Teryl Woods, of Frito-Lay. Frito-Lay was planning to honor its Million-Miler drivers at a dinner on May 9 at the company’s annual safety conference in Dallas. He asked me to give the keynote address during dinner. I have to admit it: The call made my blood run cold. The thought of speaking in front of 300 or 400 people – people who would rather be eating their dessert – made me nauseous.

I told Teryl I had a conflict with the date. He was very gracious and expressed disappointment, telling me about the impact that the safety efforts of the Million-Miler drivers have on the company’s overall safety record and why the dinner was so important. By the end of our short conversation, I knew I had to go to Dallas.

I landed at the Dallas/Ft. Worth airport, Powerpoint presentation in hand. My plan was to discuss the overall quality of the safety process at Frito-Lay – the company was honored as one of America’s Safest in 2005 – and the contribution safe drivers make to the company’s safety program.

Motor vehicle accidents are the No. 1 cause of occupational fatalities and approximately 400 Frito-Lay drivers have at least 1 million miles without an accident. Frito-Lay’s 1,700 drivers drove 141 million miles in 2005 with a reportable crash rate of 0.46 per million miles, placing Frito-Lay in the top quartile of fleets with more than 1,000 trucks.

When I arrived at the event, I was blown away. Huge banners celebrated safety and the company’s inclusion in America’s Safest Companies. As the Million-Miler drivers and their wives entered the ballroom where the dinner was held, they were given a standing ovation. The drivers appeared to be slightly embarrassed by the commotion, but proud. Many of the wives became emotional, watching as their husbands were treated like heroes.

And that’s when it struck me: They are heroes. They “walk” the safety talk every day and, as a result, make our nation’s roads safer. These men, many of whom have driven 20 or more years without an accident, set an example for us all. They climb into the driver’s seat of an 18-wheeler, drive millions of miles and never have an accident.

Safe driving is something many of us take for granted. We allow our eyes to wander from the road as we gaze at passing scenery. We think about the day ahead rather than the

cars whizzing around us. We fiddle with a CD player or cell phone. We carry on animated conversations with passengers, turning to look at them as we speak.

Safe driving doesn't happen by accident. It happens because drivers are well-educated about hazards and risks; obey traffic signs, signals and laws; pay attention to the road and the other vehicles on it; keep their vehicles well-maintained; wear their seatbelts; and don't drive when tired or impaired. That's a lot to keep in mind while you're trying to keep to a schedule, navigate through interstates that are in a perpetual state of reconstruction and find your destination.

But Frito-Lay's Million-Milers manage to keep safety in mind every day, and we are all safer because of it."

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(The following story comes from Great Britain and could be very important to your workers compensation program as it affects your drivers)

Driving Policy Protected Fleet Following Fatal Crash

A clear driving policy ensured that a fleet avoided prosecution after one of its drivers was involved in a fatal crash. Bill Pownall, a motor risk manager for Norwich Union, speaking at a Fleet News risk management conference, explained how an employer's clear guidelines about mobile phone use ensured the company was absolved of responsibility. "Police were able to prove he was on his mobile phone," said Pownall. "But when his employer was able to produce a drivers' handbook and demonstrate that induction, training, policies and procedures were subject to reviews and updates, the court decided the company had done everything that was reasonably practical to control the risk." Only the driver was prosecuted. Employers must be able to provide evidence that the policies are communicated, read, understood and regularly reviewed.

In Vermont, employers should establish company policies about the use of motor vehicles on the road-ways including the use of cell phones, seat belts, and substance abuse. However, these policies will only be effective if they are enforced.

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Disorder Results In Road Rage

A new national survey suggests that between 5.4 percent and 7.3 percent of U.S. adults qualify for a diagnosis of intermittent explosive disorder at some time during their lives (typically begins during adolescence and lasts for at least a decade, with an average of 43 episodes per person), according to a team led by sociologist Ronald C. Kessler of Harvard Medical School in Boston. The mental disorder that encompasses a wide range of recurring, hostile outbursts, including domestic violence and road rage, characterizes considerably more people than previous data had indicated. The findings were, published in the June Archives of General Psychiatry.

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New Seat Belt Designs Easier To Use

Some automakers have new belt designs for front-seat occupants with seat belts built directly into the seats instead of attaching to the sides or ceilings of vehicles. These belts are more

convenient to use and can detect pressure on brakes and automatically tighten before a crash occurs. Also in the design phase are rear-seat-belt warning systems that will be helpful to parents with children.

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UPS Safety Manager Rewards Good Drivers

As reported in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Charlie Halfen, the fleet safety manager for UPS, is ultimately responsible for training the trainers of more than 88,000 UPS drivers in the United States. Halfen's approach is working, as numbers of avoidable accidents have dropped each of the past 10 years, according to the article. Currently, the 88,000 U.S. drivers travel 2.4 billion miles a year with less than one accident per million miles on the road. Safety training includes panel trucks seen in local neighborhoods and tractor-trailers spotted on the highways. Drivers who go a year without an avoidable accident earn a gift and recognition. UPS gives more than \$5 million in safety awards annually.

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Employer Guidebook to Reduce Traffic Crashes

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS) have joined forces to create ***Guidelines for Employers to Reduce Motor Vehicle Crashes***. This publication features a 10-step program to help employers improve traffic safety performance and minimize the risk of motor vehicle crashes. The document includes success stories from employers who have benefited from effective driver safety programs, including Pike Industries with operations in Vermont.

The booklet is available to employers from: njames@labor.state.vt.us. Ask for the ***Guidelines for Employers to Reduce Motor Vehicle Crashes***. The booklet will be sent in the mail, so be sure to include your mailing address. Or, employers may download the guide from http://www.osha.gov/publications/motor_vehicle_guide.pdf.

Inattention, speed, driving while impaired, disregard for stop signs and traffic lights, and failure to yield the right of way are the major causes of crashes on our highways.



**REMEMBER -- BUCKLE YOUR SEATBELT
EVERY TIME!**